



THE SNEWSPAPER

BERNICE MACNAUGHTON HIGH SCHOOL - MONCTON NEW BRUNSWICK - MAY 19TH 2026

COUNTING DOWN THE DAYS:

WHY STUDENTS TUNE OUT BEFORE SUMMER



Beaches and warmer weather are distracting the teens

By: Lucy Kawamura

Teachers at Bernice MacNaughton High School report student focus and grades dropping recently, as warmer weather and the approaching end of the school year shift attention toward summer.

As the school year nears its end, classrooms are feeling the impact of warmer weather and fading motivation. In recent weeks, it's been hot enough where some students wore shorts, and the transition to summer is already evident. Teachers say students are increasingly distracted, struggling to stay focused on assignments and final exams, as summer approaches.

BMHS teachers report a noticeable decline in effort, compared to earlier months. Homework completion has begun to drop, and class participation is less consistent, as students shift their attention toward the upcoming holidays and time off.

Grade 10 student Macy Ploss said: "I find it's been really hard to stay focused since school is going to be over soon." She also said second semester feels way shorter, but it also feels like there's less time to complete tasks; whether that's

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MAY DAY IS HERE: LET THE FUN BEGIN!

By: Lilli Celestine

The time has arrived as Wabanaki School students step into a sea of yellow, blue, red, and orange, joining their new clans at Bernice MacNaughton High School. Scheduled for May 20th, May Day brings together incoming grade 8 students and current Highlanders for a day full of energy, excitement, and an overload of school spirit.

From inflatables and games to pizza and Bursary Bingo, May Day has become one of the most exciting events of the year. But it's more than just a fun day; it's a chance for new students to feel welcomed and for graduating students to enjoy one last celebration with their Highlander family.

Behind the scenes, however, there's far more work than most people may realize. Amelia Upright, Clans President and grade 12 student, explained that "people see the inflatables on the field, but not the hours of planning and coordination between all levels of students, staff, and admin that make it happen."

It is this consistent effort that pays off in times that bring the whole school together. When asked which moment in the day makes it feel worth it, Upright said: "When everyone's at bingo and it's super loud because people are just having fun... that's when all the work feels worth it." She also emphasized the importance of student leadership, adding that "students know what students want," which plays a major

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Photo Credit: Maggie LeClair

GROUP PROJECTS – FAIR OR FRUSTRATING?



By: Veruka Ripley Ruhnke

At Bernice MacNaughton High School, group projects are used to help students and let them collaborate. There is always talk on whether they are more frustrating than fair.

Group projects can help with workload, help develop good time management, and teach collaboration. There can be, however, conflicts between students, or blatant refusal to do what is asked of their partner.

There were many mixed answers on the subject. Jordyn Robichaud, grade 10 student, said: “Group projects, in my opinion, can be both fair or frustrating, depending heavily on who you are partnered with, due to the fact that you have to rely on the other individual to take at least half of the work for themselves, if your partner is incompetent or lazy, it will reflect on you both.”

They then went on to mention how group projects *can* be fair, saying: “The opposite could happen, making the experience fair, so it’s truly the flip of the coin.”

“I think they can be both, because it would depend on your partner if you have a good partner, then they can be fair, but if you don’t have a good partner, then they’re just always frustrating and it feels like nothing gets done. If you have a good partner, then things run smoothly and it makes the work seem easier, as well as seem fun,” said BMHS student Felix Russell.

Devin McConaghy, a grade 10 student said: “I think it depends on the situation. I find that they tend to be more frustrating and annoying to do when you don’t get to pick a group and you’re put with a random person. I also think that if you get the option to pick, and you choose people who work well, it can go well and can get done in a good amount of time.”

Another BMHS student, Nolan McNally, said: “I think they can be fair if you’re placed with the right people, but more

often than not, you get paired with people who either take over the project or do way too little.”

On the other hand, Eva Nickerson, grade 10 student, explained: “I think group projects are more frustrating than fair, because of the fact that you don’t get to choose who you work with and if its someone you have issues with, then it is not fun. Also, there are some people who don’t like to do the work and others end up doing all of it and then it ends up being unfair or putting others in uncomfortable situations.”

When asked her opinion, grade 10 student Emily Richard said: “I think they are frustrating because sometimes one person in the group does all the work, and the one who doesn’t do anything still gets credit, even if they did not do the work, which is unfair to everyone else who put in effort.”

Some students actually said that they found group projects fair, such as grade 11 student Clifford Bartlett Glidden: “I find that group projects are fair; the reason I find them to be fair is because normally, when there is a group project, the teacher will do a review page, asking about the split work of the group.”

Grade 10 student Lyla Stokes noted that: “Group projects happen to be a great experience for kids and teenagers to give them the chance to not only socialize, but to also learn and collaborate with each other. What isn’t fair is that as people get older, they don’t usually have the option on if they want to or not, which can cause problems like frustrating, anxiety, or even hatred towards the other person, which leads to a bad mark. Not because they didn’t know what they were doing, but because it just wasn’t a great situation.”

Finally, English Language Arts Extended teacher, Ms. Kimberly Place said: “I actually think group projects are a great way to collaborate with classmates and learn from one

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COUNTING (CON'T)

because teachers are giving less time to complete work, cramming things in, or the ongoing procrastination and short attention span of the students. Macy did say, however, what keeps her motivated is the realization that if she fails a class, she will have to retake it, which is not on her summer bucket list.

Georgia Ribout, a student graduating in a couple months, said: "I find it hard to keep focus on academics, especially since graduation is right around the corner. I really have to work harder than I ever had to before to keep my grades up, as I have no motivation for school."

As a grad, it's especially difficult, since this is the final push, and they can't risk failure just because the thought of summer is stuck in their minds. Grads, like Georgia, work extra hard to make sure they can walk down that aisle the last day, in their cap and gown and not have to worry about BMHS worksheets again.

Rebecca Dos Santos, a grade 10 student, said she thinks students' attention spans shorten by the end of the year because: "In the beginning of the year, you're excited because you get to see your friends, you're motivated to go to school, but towards the end of the year, you're just feeling the pressure and the stress of everything." The pressure and stress of needing to do well and get things done makes you rush, which makes you do worse in certain courses.

It becomes overwhelming. Students say their brains feel fried, and they lose focus, and they just need a break. Not to mention the sun screaming your name. Imagining days at the beach is yet another reason summer can't get out of some students' heads. It gets us caught up in thinking about the future, and we forget about present tasks.

This isn't the case for everyone. Sharon Maeng, a 10th grade student, says thinking about summer gives her more motivation to get her work done. She states: "I am greatly affected by the weather. When the weather starts to get warmer, I feel my body is more energized. It makes me motivated to do stuff at all times, whether it is school or sports."

Even teachers had opinions on the topic. Ms. Emilee Layden, when asked about students' focus, answered: "There is definitely a change second semester from first, in focus and output. The change is widespread, and I would say there are also more disruptions to class time (often for positive things like awards assemblies, RED assemblies, course selection, holidays). These important and meaningful disruptions impact momentum in the classroom. The weather change probably brings the biggest influence. Learners start long-

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WHAT MAKES A BIOPIC SUCCESSFUL?

By: Michael Robles



Biographical films, or biopics, tell real-life stories. Making them good isn't easy. Filmmakers have to balance truth with good storytelling. A strong biopic doesn't just show what happened, it helps the audience feel connected to the person and their life.

One important consideration is balancing accuracy and entertainment. People want the movie to be true, but also interesting and entertaining to watch. As grad Cris Macias says: "I feel like it has a mix of both you need to fully cover and be accurate about real life, but if you want the biopic to be good it should be entertaining. Personally I rather for it to be entertaining by adding some things that didn't happen to the story." This suggests that sometimes small changes are required to make a movie more enjoyable for some people.

Storytelling also matters. The film *Oppenheimer* focuses on J. Robert Oppenheimer and his struggles, instead of just listing facts. Graduating student Dominick Swarbrick said: "Well the biopic film that I really enjoyed watching was the movie *Oppenheimer* because it was the about how the film explores the moral dilemma of a man who creates a weapon capable of destroying the world to save it. After the successful Trinity test and the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Oppenheimer ends up with deep regret and political fallout, and I really like movies that take place in WWII, I think that they portrayed the Manhattan project almost perfectly." His response highlights how emotional depth and detail can make a biopic more powerful.

Casting is another important factor in the success of the biopic. Sauno Veysey explains: "Yeah, I think the actor should

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Photo Credit: Maggie LeClair

THE END OF PAJAMA DAY: WHAT HAPPENED?

By: Ana Kutsurenko

BMHS used to have Pyjama Days often, until it changed to “Comfy and Cozy Day,” because of continuous dress code issues, leaving most students confused and blaming the wrong parties. Many students don’t know why there was a change because there has not been any clear information provided about the rationale.

Most students are simply unaware of the issue that caused PJ days to stop, just like a BMHS grade 10 student, Matilda Aina, said: “(It) takes away the one day where most people feel free to dress more laidback and cozy to school, it was a day when we didn’t have to take dressing up for school seriously and now that it’s not there anymore – people don’t feel comfortable doing so in a typical school day because no one else is going to, and people want to fit it.”

Many students blame Student Government, even though decisions like this are mostly made by our administration.

BMHS teacher, Ms. Melanie Melanson explained that administration often overrides StuGov’s decisions, who then must adjust. Melanson shared: “When Student Government wants to do a theme week or any event at our school, we come up with a variety of ideas in our meetings and then our co-presidents go to the administration to talk about those ideas(...)”

Onyeka Ononju, a BMHS grade 11 student and a member of Student Government, who only found out about this issue last Christmas, further explained what he knows about the reason behind this decision. “From what I’ve heard we

can no longer have PJ days because it seems some people dress somewhat indecently. While I understand that punishing *all* for the actions of *some* might not be fair; it seems to have been a reoccurring issue, which is why Mr. MacDonald decided to stop the entire thing all together.”

Layla Adams, a BMHS grad and Student Government President, added to Ononju’s explanation with more detail: “It’s an admin decision that was made when people were doing things they know they really shouldn’t be doing at school. (...) What people consider to be PJs is not what Student Government intended for people to wear... this includes tops and shorts that are a little too revealing for the school’s dress code. (...) It sucks, because that’s what the admin notices. They notice the small groups more that the large ones because they make the biggest impact. And honestly, it makes people uncomfortable if someone at school is wearing something that’s a little ‘risqué’. But yeah, as I said it’s just really unfortunate for the people who genuinely wanted to wear plaid pants and like a hoodie. Because wearing PJs at school, it’s cute, it’s comfortable, and now we can’t do it,” shared Adams.

Since this is quite a problem at BMHS, it made us wonder if other schools in Moncton are not allowed PJ days. Kristina Olkhinitskaya, a grade 10 student at Mathieu Martin mentioned: “See I really don’t understand why Bernice MacNaughton doesn’t have pajama days. My school, Mathieu Martin, has them at least once a month, usually twice a month. You know I really feel like it’s a fun activity that brings the school together and there’s really no harm in it so

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TUESDAY
(MAY 5, 2026)




WEDNESDAY
(MAY 6, 2026)

THURSDAY
(MAY 7, 2026)

FRIDAY
(MAY 8, 2026)

Tuesday (May 5, 2026)

▼ \$5 Meal
3 items

<p>Honey Garlic Meatballs wit...</p> <p>Lean beef meatballs tossed...</p> <p>\$5.00</p> 	<p>Spaghetti Marinara*</p> <p>Whole wheat spaghetti covered...</p> <p>\$5.00</p> 	<p>Chicken Flatbread</p> <p>Diced chicken on an oven-fired herb...</p> <p>\$5.00</p> 
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NO PRE-ORDER, NO LUNCH

By: Clara Nguyen

Our school cafeteria just had a significant change that has left many students frustrated and unprepared. Now students have to pre-order their lunch the day before instead of buying it the same day. For example, if you want to order something for Monday, you need to order it on Friday the week before by using the website *Chartwellsk12.ca*.

According to the school cafeteria's staff, the change is supposed to make things faster, reduce food waste, and help staff know how much food they need to make. But not all students are happy with it, and some say it makes things harder.

According to Adeboye Oluwafemi, a grade 11 student: "I get why they did it, but it's hard to remember to order the day before. If I forget, then I'll just starve."

Other students say this new rule takes away flexibility; for example, Olivia Ward, a grade 12 student, says: "Sometimes I don't even know what I want to eat until lunch time, and now I have to decide way earlier, and I don't always feel like eating what I made that morning."

The problem is worse for students who don't always plan ahead. If someone forgets their lunch or has activities after school, they might not be able to eat at all, which is not fair for them.

Not everyone hates the new system, such as Dwayne Ambion, a grade 9 student, who said: "The lines are shorter now, and it's more organized, and if you pre-order, it's actually faster to get your food than to wait."

Some students think the system could work better with small changes. Such as having some extra small meals for

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Some things online stay there forever...

DIGITAL FOOTPRINTS: DO STUDENTS REALLY CARE?

By: Steven Shi

In today's world, almost everything people do online leaves a digital footprint. From posting on social media, liking posts, commenting, and even searching things online, students are constantly building an online identity, whether they realize it or not. But the question is: do high school students *actually care* about their digital footprints?

At BMHS, grade 12 students had different opinions, showing both awareness and some lack of attention toward the issue.

Jackson MacKenzie, a grade 12 student, said that it is important, but students are not always aware of it. "It's something that you definitely should care about, but nowadays a lot of the students lack the awareness of it," he said. His point shows that even though people know it matters, they

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COUNTING (CON'T)

ing for the freedom of summer. They need more encouragement, pep talks, and more time to focus on the course requirements to get them accomplished.”

Layden thinks that focus is being lost due to the many distractions that happen towards the end of the year. Classes being disrupted by events make it difficult to stay on task and gives students less time to finish work. But as Layden said, the shift in weather is where the biggest change in concentration lies. When the weather changes, peoples’ moods change, and students would rather be out in the sun than trapped inside their school.

Ms. Julie Verzilli, teacher at BMHS, said: “I notice people spending more time in hallways, not working on assignments when given time in class, efforts from students going downhill, kids leaving multiple classes.” She also agreed that the average grades drop in second semester. Verzilli also said: “Teachers also feel this way, but they have to push through.”

Many teachers agree that students start to tune out when it gets close to summer, but it’s almost done, so just like the teachers’ do, students should give their final push.

As the final weeks at BMHS tick down, it’s clear that slipping focus isn’t simply about burnout; it’s often fueled by anticipation. For some students, the excitement of summer acts as a motivator, pushing them to finish strong and meet deadlines, while others find it harder to stay engaged, their attention already drifting beyond the classroom.

Teachers, too, feel the shift, balancing their own end of year fatigue with the responsibility to keep lessons meaningful and students on track.

In the end, this seasonal dip in focus reflects less a lack of effort and more the shared sense that a well-earned break is just around the corner.

GROUPS (CON'T)

another. It also mimics many jobs you may encounter after high school that require you to work with people with whom you may not normally work.”

As stated previously, group projects are used as a learning opportunity, helping students learn responsibility, communication, and skill sets that might help with their future.

There is always discussion on whether they are fair, or frustrating, and everyone has a different opinion. They can be found fair, but more often than not, most students find them more so frustrating.

MAY DAY (CON'T)

role in shaping an event everyone can enjoy.

For volunteers, May Day is just as meaningful. Luna Viljeon is a grade 11 student who shared that her first experience truly helped ease her nerves about high school. “It made me a lot less worried about making friends... there were so many different people, and I felt like I could find where I fit in right away.” Now, she keeps coming back because: “you see grade 8s come in nervous and leave genuinely happy... and it feels good knowing you helped with that.”

For incoming students, the excitement is already building. Milan Viljoen is a grade 8 student from Wabanaki, who said: “I am really excited for high school... for the freedom, the clubs, and just being with my friends.” Viljoen also admires the opportunity BMHS provides for him to even start a club of his own. While some nerves still exist, events like this can help make the transition feel a little less overwhelming and a lot more exciting, which he hopes can happen for him.

With games happening all around, prizes to be won, and smiles everywhere, May Day continues to create memories that last well beyond a single day. This year brings a small but exciting change, as Highlanders will be dismissed a period early to join in on the fun even sooner.

Ticket sales begin this week - and if there’s one thing students can agree on, it’s that May Day is a day you won’t want to miss.

NO LUNCH (CON'T)

students who didn’t pre-order or having limited same-day orders. Hopefully, the school might look at the new system again and change it depending on the feedback. But for now, students are still getting used to it, even if it’s not perfect.

As things continue, the new rule shows how hard it can be to balance making things easier while keeping it easy for everyone.

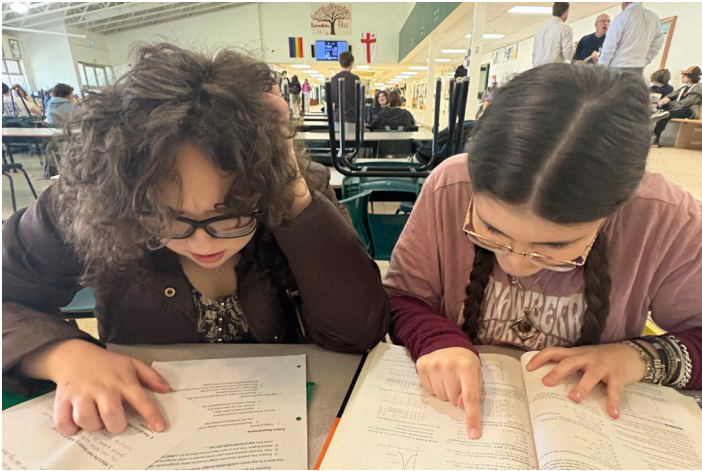
BIOPICS (CON'T)

look like the real person so it feels more real. It helps you believe you’re actually watching them. If they looked completely different, it would feel like someone else’s story and you wouldn’t connect as much.” This emphasizes how important *appearance* is in making the story feel believable.

In conclusion, a good biopic needs a mix of truth, good storytelling, and strong acting.

When these come together, the movie can be both interesting and meaningful, leaving a lasting impression and helping people remember the person the biopic was about.

UNDER PRESSURE: STUDENT ANXIETY IN HIGH SCHOOL



Students stressing about Calculus

By: Isabelle Boudreau

The bell rings, but instead of excitement, many students feel a knot tighten in their chest. Between looming deadlines, social pressure, and constant expectations, anxiety has become a quiet, persistent part of student life. In the midst of late-night cramming and searching for small ways to make it through the day, they have come up with coping mechanisms to deal with the stress.

With approximately 32% of students aged 13-18 having experienced anxiety within their academic years, according to the National Institute of Mental Health, stress is far from uncommon. Anxiety has become embedded in the high school experience; however, these numbers only tell part of the story. Behind them are experiences that are deeply personal and unique to every student.

When asked what academic situations trigger her anxiety, grade 11 student Alexandria Butland explains: "Class presentations, like leading up to them I get worried that I am going to forget everything that I need to say. But there's just something about thinking about being in front of a whole class that makes me anxious."

For some students, anxiety is not limited to major assignments but extends into everyday routines. This creates a constant sense of pressure to stay on top of everything.

"I feel like I can't miss any days or I'll have a bunch to catch up on," says grade 11 student Storm Colbourne, emphasizing how missing even a single day can become overwhelming.

The need to perform at their best and always be on top of responsibilities makes it harder for students to prioritize their personal well-being. Over time, this mindset can build into ongoing stress, where school feels less like a place of learning and more like a cycle of trying to keep up.

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THE IMPACTS OF CANCEL CULTURE IN MODERN SOCIETY

By: Skyler Rafferty

In recent years, cancel culture has become a widely discussed issue both online and in daily life. Cancel culture refers to situations where a person, business, or public figure receives a heavy impact (mostly always negative), usually on social media, because of something they said or did that others find offensive.

The supporters of cancel culture argue that it helps hold people accountable for their misdeeds, but opposers to cancel culture say it goes too far most of the time. As social media continues to grow, cancel culture has had a significant impact on modern society in both positive and negative ways.

Cris Macias, a grade 12 student, said: "Some of my favorite celebrities have gotten canceled for some of the stupidest reasons out there and that affects me because most of the time they stop making music because of it."

This shows that cancel culture doesn't only impact the person or celebrity being accused but also the fans and communities connected to them. While some believe cancel culture is necessary to encourage responsibility and social change, others think it can quickly turn into online bullying and unfair judgment without proper education on the topic and backstory.

Many cancel culture communities are very shallow and have a sort of mob mentality, ready to jump on anybody, anytime for anything they didn't like. On the other hand, there are a bunch of people on the Internet cancel culture community that are just trying to make a real deference, not letting anything slide.

Ms. Amy Johnson, a resource teacher working at the learning center, had this to say: "I wouldn't say that it's affecting me directly, but I would say it's made me aware of the impact our words can have on other people. Like depending on many contributing factors something that's normal in my family's household might come off as offensive to others so sometimes it's hard to stay in a neutral zone when there are many deferring people with differing ideas of this world."

This statement explains how cancel culture has caused many people to think more carefully about the things they say and how others might react to their words. It also shows that people's backgrounds, cultures, and life experiences can shape what they see as respectful or offensive. It can sometimes be difficult to know what is

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SENIORITIS: IS IT A REAL THING?

By: Haley Patterson

As the school year winds down, many grade 12 students start to lose motivation. Assignments and studying begin to get pushed off, and the excitement of graduation takes over. Students and teachers often call this senioritis. Is this a real thing or an excuse for slacking off?

Senioritis can show up in various of ways for different students. Some may begin to procrastinate on their work or stop putting in as much effort into assignments, while other students may skip class or care less about due dates and deadlines. This can be influenced by getting caught up in the excitement of their future plans like college or university.

For many, senioritis feels very real. Students who used to stay on top of their assignments and studied consistently may suddenly find it harder to keep up. Clara Foster, a BMHS grade 12 student, stated: "Yes, senioritis is definitely real. My average is dropping and it is so much harder to make myself do homework." This highlights how senioritis can have a negative impact on student's grades and effort.

Nika Shakerinia, another grade 12 BMHS student said: "I found it harder in the first semester but now that I'm nearing the end it's getting easier to show up, but I still think senioritis is a real thing." This shows a slightly different experience. Some students struggle more earlier on, and their motivation can improve as they get closer to the finish line.

Even though this is mostly affecting seniors, it might not just be limited to them. Mr Dave Turcotte said: "What is really surprising about senioritis is that grade 11 think it is applicable to them too." This suggests that the feeling of losing motivation near the end of the year can affect younger students too, especially when summer is approaching.

Overall, senioritis appears to be real for many students. It can make it harder to stay motivated, keep up with assignments, and focus in class. While every student experiences it differently, many seniors agree that it becomes more noticeable as graduation gets closer.

COUPLES WHO PDA IN SCHOOL

By: Annie Balycheva

Many BMHS students agreed that one of the worst experiences in school is trying to get to your class and being blocked by a couple having their romantic movie moment. Public displays of affection, also known as PDA, have become an integral part of everyday school life.

But is it always a problem?

There's obviously nothing wrong with having a relationship in school. Having somebody who supports you, keeps your company, and walks to class with you can be helpful to feel comfortable in the school environment. Being affectionate isn't a bad thing, as long as it is happening in respectful manners. When does it become too much?

Grade 10 student, Nolan McNally says: "I think holding hands and little kisses are fine, but making out in the middle of the halls is crossing many lines."

Many Highlanders suggest it's just a time and place problem. Grade 12 student, Victor Freitas says: "I get here at 8:50 in the morning, and the last thing I wanna see is people making out in the hallways. And actually, throughout the day, I don't wanna see people making out, like just get a room."

This sentiment was confirmed by many other students interviewed.

You arrive to school at 8AM, pushing kids out of your way, trying your best to get through the day, and the last thing you want to see is two of your classmates exchanging saliva in the middle of a hallway.

Grade 10 student, Jana Timani says "Honestly, I think PDA is fine, when you're *not* at school, but we are all just here trying to make it through the six hours that

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PDA is a common offense in our hallways

UNITY THROUGH DIVERSITY: CELEBRATING AND EMBRACING CULTURAL DIVERSITY THROUGH SHOWCASING PERFORMANCES



Photo credit: Shanti Orange

By: Shanti Orange Tacotaco

We may have different roots, but we are united as a single family. Students from every corner of the world carrying diverse cultural backgrounds came together to celebrate and share their traditions, stories, and heritage. Through music, performances, and shared experiences.

“Performing *Circle of Life* means a lot to me. The song is about human connection and the continuity of life through hope, joy and despair. The song at its core is deeply uplifting, performing it made me feel connected to everybody else who has sung it before me. The song is in Zulu, so I learnt about the values of Zulu culture and what is important to them,” said grade 12 student Emerald Idowu, one of the lead vocalists in the choir, highlighting how singing can bridge a deeper understanding of cultural values and through shared emotions.

Yadian Wang, grade 10 student, involved in the Chinese lion act, described the experience as both exciting and concerning “performing was really awesome, there was a lot more excitement than I expected for us. We worked for over a month to choreograph the show, to find a place to practice, and to sync things up with the drumming, so it was really awesome to see the effort Phoebe, Dianya and I put in.”

“After the show, I was worried that we might get made fun

of because it’s a tradition using what some people might call a furry costume (the Chinese Lion).” She added, overall illustrating how sometimes ignoring judgements or critiques from others can lead to meaningful cultural exchange.

Ruby Grant, grade 10 student, exclaimed that: “I thought it was so awesome, me and my friends really enjoyed it. It was really cool to see a little peak into so many different cultures. Everyone did so good and I hope there’s many more cultural assemblies in the future!” expressing enthusiasm and anticipation for more future cultural assemblies.

“I think the more we are exposed to other cultures, the more we appreciate our differences. It can humanize the experience as well. Students (slash) people see others they know and encourage (slash) cheer them on while sharing a part of their culture. It can take away the fear some may have towards others they don’t know or understand,” Ms. Julie Verzilli noted, pointing out that more diverse exposures can create a stronger bond and supportive environment.

In conclusion, don’t let stigmas and discrimination affect how you express your culture and who you are. Each performance, was not only memorable but also taught others to learn, appreciate, and connect to those who shared a piece of their heritage.

The event also gave a stronger sense of belonging among students— by creating a safe space to express.

BMHS JV VOLLEYBALL BOYS MAKES IT TO PROVINCIALS



By: Rayne Rapadas

After a long *thirteen years* of defeat and loss, the Bernice MacNaughton Junior Varsity Volleyball Boys team finally makes it to provincials. The boys' team will oppose Cité des Jeunes from Edmundston, believed to be the strongest in the league, they will also oppose Ecole L'Odyssee, and Fredericton High school on May 2nd and 3rd at Quispamsis.

The JV Volleyball Boys' team had an exciting and powerful regular season, from becoming third place in the east to becoming the first in the east and second in the northeast.

Overcoming hardships and struggles that they were faced, they pushed through to be the strongest and the toughest and will continue to dominate their way over to provincials.

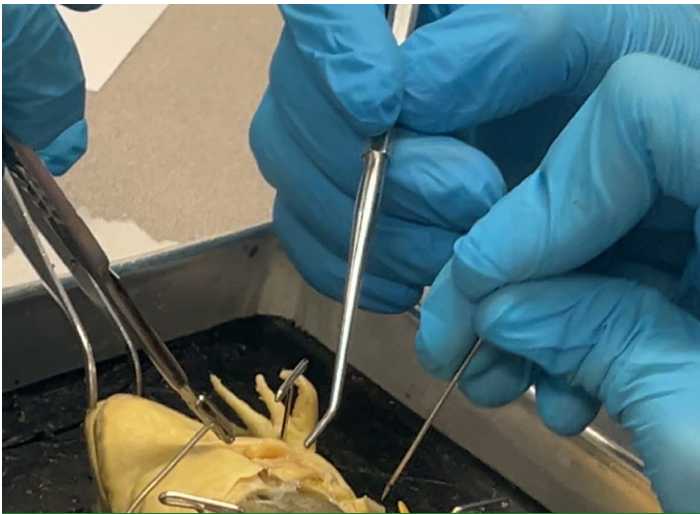
Malek Elsobky, a player on the team, when asked about how he felt being in a team that made it to provincials for the first time in 13 years, said: "It's solid, we expected it, so its not really a surprise. We've been putting in the work all season, so this is just part of that. But were not done yet we've got more to prove."

The boys have shown an impressive amount of growth and development along the weeks that they have been practicing together, they have improved in many ways on and off the court, picking up lessons from the coaches about the volleyball and the importance of things in life.

Zachary Bouchard, head coach for the team, says: "The players went from being one of the worst team in the league to being in the top five of the province as the underdogs. Nobody expected that they would play at such a high level by the end of the season. Not only did they grow on the court, but they also grew as men by taking accountability and respecting the other players on the court."

The boys' team made a very memorable season so far with all the laughter and excitements experienced throughout the season, many of the players enjoyed their time with each other with practices and games and going to tournaments and spending the night all together.

With the volleyball season coming to an end, the boys try to win it all this coming Saturday at Quispamsis.



LOVE IT OR HATE IT? DISSECTION IN BIOLOGY CLASS



By: Ludi Choi

Dissection is a big part of Biology classes, but not every student feels the same way about it. While some students find it exciting and helpful, others feel uncomfortable or even disgusted. So, is dissection a valuable learning experience, or is it something unnecessary?

For many students, dissection is one of the most memorable parts of Biology class. It gives students a chance to see real organs and understand how living things are structured. Hands-on learning, like dissection, can make a huge difference in improving the understanding of anatomy since students are actively involved rather than just reading from a textbook. Animals commonly used in schools, such as frogs and pigs, have organ systems that are similar to humans, which gives students a better understanding of their own bodies as well.

Some students say they enjoy the experience because it is fun. Lua Choi, a BMHS student who took biology last semester, had a more positive experience. "I actually liked it," she says. "My favorite part was the pig dissection, and it was interesting to see how everything looked in real life."

Others feel that dissection prepares them for future careers in science or medicine, where understanding anatomy is important.

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BEHIND THE SCENES OF UNIFIED BASKETBALL

By: Chloe Blanchard

Unified Basketball embodies the inclusive community of Highlanders at BMHS. Each Friday, players and coaches gather at lunch for an hour filled with smiles, laughter, and jokes, while enjoying the sport we all love: basketball. Experiencing wellness through sport is one of the most fulfilling ways to stay active, all while enjoying the company of your peers.

Grade 12 student, Coach Isabel Kang, expressed her gratitude for the program by saying: "Unified has been a great experience for me, I get to meet new people all while staying active. It's a great way to end a long school week."

Many people often assume that coaching Unified Basketball is solely a Friday, noon-hour volunteering opportunity, when in reality, it is so much more than that. It is showing up without fail to help those with exceptionalities, and motivating them every day, not just for them, but for yourself as well. It gives everyone something to look forward to after a long week, and more specifically, it gives those who don't have the same opportunities as the average student a sense

of belonging.

Unified player, Ysabelle Gafud, when asked about their favorite basketball drill, said: "I love everything, but if I had to pick one, it would be dribbling. We do it as a team."

The coaches are just as enthusiastic when it comes to training. A huge part of Unified Basketball is learning to adapt to certain situations and inspiring the people around you to do their best even if they aren't motivated.

Unified basketball and adaptive abilities cheer coach, Lauren Smith, when asked about her personal experience with the programs, said: "It is truly the most rewarding experience to be involved in such wonderful organizations. You learn equally as much from them as they learn from you. I wish there was more exposure and inclusion surrounding these programs."

This journalist encourages everyone to become involved in one of the most rewarding in-school activities.

Being able to carry both memories and knowledge into future opportunities is the most fulfilling accomplishment.



WHAT GOOD VIDEO GAMES ARE OUT THERE?

By: Kayden Simpson

Video games continue to be one of today's most popular forms of entertainment, with players enjoying everything from strategy games to action-packed shooters. While some gamers believe the industry has had a few weak releases recently, many still think there are stand-out titles worth playing.

Grade 11 student Jack Woods says: "Video gaming has seen some slop in recent years, but there are some diamonds in the rough. Games like *Half-Life 2*, *Crow Country*, *Kerbal Space Program*, and *Stellaris* are amazing titles." Woods believes that even though not every modern release is successful, there are still many games that stand out because of their creativity and gameplay.

Xander Cawdle, grade 11 student, is excited about upcoming releases as well as current popular games. "*LEGO Batman: Legacy of the Dark Knight* has not come out yet, but so far, it is looking to be a good game when it releases on May 22nd. For a game out right now, I would say *Mouse: P.I. For Hire* because it is one of the most popular games on stores right now."

Riley Myshrall, also in grade 11, enjoys a variety of multiplayer and strategy-based games. "I am really into games like *War Thunder*, *Clash of Clans*, and *Star Wars Battlefront II* because they all have unique styles of gameplay. Some are more competitive and strategic, while others are just fun to play with friends. Games like this show how gaming can bring people together and give players a way to relax, compete, and enjoy different experiences."

Overall, gamers continue to have many different opinions on what makes a game great. Whether it is classic titles, new releases, or multiplayer experiences with friends, video games are still an important part of entertainment and culture today.

STUDENTS WITH AI TOOLS

By: Yassin Ali

Over the past couple of years, AI tools have become easier to access and are playing an important role in students lives. Most students nowadays are using AI to help with mostly all their home and schoolwork. Some apps like CHATGPT, CHAT-AI, and GOOGLE-AI can answer any question within seconds, it can explain any hard lessons, and even do your whole assignment for you. Because of how fast and easy it is to access, most students turn to AI before turning to teachers for help.

A student from grade 12 BMHS, Kieran Waugh, mentioned that: "When I show up and I have surprise tests, AI helps explain the whole lesson within two minutes."

This is one of the reasons why students really like AI; if somebody can't understand a math equation or a science theory or even an English essay, AI explains it all in easier words, it can also be used to get ideas for assignments or also help a student get started with what they were confused with.

Another grade 12 student, Alec Donaher, said that "It's really helpful when you miss a day at school, you catch up really fast with AI."

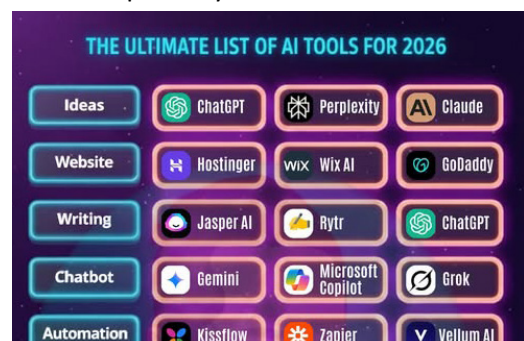
AI can be useful, but there are still a lot of concerns on how students use it.

Teachers are worried about students just cheating through AI and getting their work done without getting any knowledge about what they are even doing.

Teachers want students to use AI as a helper, not something that takes over their whole creativity. BMHS teacher Mr. Craig Allen said that: "I think AI can be a good learning tool, if used honestly."

Another problem with AI is that it is not always going to give you the right information, sometimes it gives you answers that do not even make sense or is not correct or related to the topic ur working on at all.

To conclude, AI as of 2026 is becoming a big part of school and learning and it can help students a lot, but students still need to use it responsibly.



From Simply Digital (Facebook)



Students enjoying the winter weather on their day off from school

CANADIAN WINTER WEATHER'S EFFECTS ON SCHOOL LIFE

By: Peter Du

Every student in Canada knows the feeling of waking up in January, looking out the window, and checking their phone, hoping that a snow day alert is waiting for them. Winter in Canada is a huge part of the Canadian identity and is known for its ferociousness.

Every year, students from coast to coast have to deal with not only the freezing weather, but also the never-ending question of whether school will actually be cancelled tomorrow. It's safe to say that the weather is a vital part of the school lives of Canadian students, but how much impact does it really have?

This journalist spoke with students from different parts of Canada about their personal experiences with Canadian weather and the ways in which it has affected their school lives. Specifically, snow days were a major topic of discussion, there are certainly some interesting perspectives from each region of Canada.

Grade 11 student from Moncton, Isaac MacDonald, when asked about his thoughts on Canadian winters, said, "Canadian winters are really cold. I find that I really like it the first few weeks but then I get tired of all the snow and I can't wait for it to be over. The winter does mean I get to play hockey, though, so that's a win. I like that we get to miss school, play hockey, and have fun. I do not like that we have to shovel snow and be cold and wet all the time."

When asked about his thoughts on snow days specifically, MacDonald said: "I'd say that snow days are very beneficial. It's a good day to help kids get caught up on their work and relax. There should be more snow days, so we can really get rid of the stress from school by chilling and hanging out with friends. It's pretty good for my mental health, I'd say."

A grade 10 student from Timmins, Ontario, Abigail Sinclair, shared a different perspective on snow days. Sinclair said: "So I live in northern Ontario and I think we definitely get more snow here than you would in New Brunswick. During

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CYBERBULLYING HOW SERIOUS IS IT REALLY?

By: Cohen Perry

With the Internet becoming more and more common in daily life, so has a new form of bullying: Cyberbullying. In recent years, cyberbullying has been labeled a major issue, especially among teenagers and young adults. But how serious is it really? Is it really as widespread and harmful an issue as people make it seem? Or is it a problem that just stays behind the screen?

This article will mainly be about the more common forms of cyberbullying seen online, such as harassment, insults, and targeted comments. While more extreme cases, like doxxing, blackmail, and violent threats, are also forms of cyberbullying, they are a much higher level of severity and are not the kind of bullying that will be focused on here.

Gone are the days when bullying only happened face-to-face. Today, social media apps, online games, and comment sections have created new spaces where people can target others from behind a screen and cyberbullying has become a common part of online culture. The question isn't how common cyberbullying is, but how seriously people should take it and what can be done to stop it.

A big reason cyberbullying happens is because many people feel anonymous and unharmable, when online. When someone is sitting in the comfort of their home, miles away from the person they are messaging, the fear of consequences can seem much smaller. As Andrew Manear, a

CONTINUED ON PAGE 15

"#&%\$!!!"

"SHUT UP!"

"YOU SUCK!!!"

FOOTPRINT (CON'T)

don't always think about the long term effects when posting online.

Shay Ferguson, another grade 12 student, thinks: "it is something that we should learn in school," she said. Her opinion suggests that students might take it more seriously if it was actually part of lessons and not just something people talk about.

Elshan Rahnamania, also in grade 12, had a more serious warning about it. "Be aware of your behaviour because your footprint could ruin your life," he said. His statement shows how online actions can have real consequences later on, like jobs or schools checking your past activity.

Overall, students at BMHS seem to know digital footprints are important, but many still don't fully think about what they post online. With how instantaneous social media is, people often post first and think later, which can cause problems in the future.

Digital footprints don't go away easily, so even small actions online can stay for a long time. As students grow up in a more digital world, being careful online is becoming more and more important, even if people don't always realize it in the moment.

DISSECTION (CON'T)

Not everyone, however, feels comfortable with it. To some students, dissection might be distressing and unpleasant. The smell of preservatives like formaldehyde, the sight of a real animal, or personal beliefs about animal rights can make the experience unpleasant.

Rubi Choi, a Grade 9 student at BMHS, says she is unsure about taking Biology next year because of it. "I don't think I could do it," she explains. "It just really disgusts me, and I don't like the idea of cutting open an animal." Her reaction is common for many students who feel uneasy about working with real animals.

There are also students who feel neutral about the experience. Ana Martin, a BMHS graduate who took Biology, says: "It wasn't my favorite thing, but it wasn't that bad either. I just saw it as part of the course." Her perspective shows that not all students have strong reactions, and some simply just don't put too much thought into it.

In the end, dissection is a topic with strong opinions on both sides. While it can be an engaging and educational experience, it is not the right fit for every student.

One thing is clear; it's an experience that students won't easily forget.

WINTERS (CON'T)

winter, we almost get a snow day every single week. This year, we even had an entire week off because the snow would be piled so high on the roads and driveways and people could not even get outside. I know you might think this is good, but people here actually prefer to not have snow days. Because they happen so often, we have online classes when there's snow days and it's worse than going to school. All you can do all day is just sit in your house doing nothing."

Finally, on the west coast, grade 11 student Paul Huynh, who had recently moved from Moncton, New Brunswick to Abbotsford, British Columbia, gave his thoughts and made some comparisons. Huynh said: "There's not that many snow days around here, the snow's not as bad compared to Moncton. We only had one day off due to the weather I think and that's because it was raining balls of ice. I will say though, I miss snow days, but also I kind of don't like them. A lot of the time, snow days would push my tests to the next day and then I'd have to have like three tests in one day. I think that snow days can sometimes be bad for learning."

Huynh and Sinclair's comments revealed that while snow days can be fun and relaxing, like MacDonald said, it can also have negative impacts as well. We can clearly see how different regions of Canada have different views on the harsh winter weather.

Snow days are a great thing when you're looking to relax; however, they can become terrible when you already have things planned for the day at school. The cold Canadian winters certainly play a great part of the school lives of Canadian students, in ways both good and bad.

CANCEL CULTURE (CON'T)

considered appropriate to say online or in public. As a result, many people feel pressure to stay neutral or avoid sharing their thoughts altogether out of fear of being criticized or "canceled." This demonstrates how cancelling culture not only affects celebrities and public figures but also influences everyday people and the way they communicate with others.

In conclusion, cancelling culture has become an important part of today's society due to the growth of social media and online resources. Although it can encourage accountability and bring attention to serious issues, it can also end in harsh criticism and make people afraid to express their opinions. People's views and experiences make them view culture differently based on their own backgrounds and perspectives. In the end, cancelling culture has both good and bad things like most things and it is important for society to create a balance between holding people accountable and allowing them the opportunity to grow and improve from their mistakes.

WHAT ARE STUDENT'S PET PEEVES ABOUT TEACHERS?

By: Alex Doiron

At Bernice MacNaughton High School (BMHS), students spend most of their day in classrooms where learning, deadlines, and expectations all come together. While students understand that teachers work hard to plan lessons and support learning, there are still certain classroom habits that can become pet peeves over time. When students were asked about their biggest frustrations with teachers, their responses focused on workload, grading speed, and classroom practices that feel unnecessary.

Ava Doucet, a grade 11 student, shared a frustration that many students can relate to. She said: "When teachers take forever to grade simple assignments and teachers who hit their students with tests every single week. Like give us a break, PLEASE!" Doucet's comment highlights two key issues. First, when assignments are not graded quickly, students are left waiting for feedback that could help them improve. Without timely responses, it can feel like their effort goes unnoticed. Second, having tests every week creates constant pressure. Although assessments are important, too many in a short period of time can make school feel overwhelming rather than productive.

Emma Watkins, a Grade 12 student, focused more on the overall workload students face. She explained: "Asking too much from students and not understanding why they are stressed out so much from the work they are giving out." Watkins response shows that students often feel overloaded by assignments from multiple classes at once. When teachers focus only on their own course, it can be easy to forget that students are balancing several subjects each day. This can lead to students feeling stressed and misunderstood when their workload becomes too much to manage comfortably.

Hazel Clarke, a grade 9 student, pointed out a different type of frustration related to classroom activities. She stated, "Making us write notes that we will never use in the future." Clarke's comment reflects a feeling that some tasks seem repetitive or disconnected from real-life usefulness.

While note-taking can be helpful for studying, students may not always see the purpose behind writing large amounts of information that they believe they will not use later. This shows the importance of helping students understand how classroom work connects to their learning and future goals.

Although these pet peeves may seem small, individually, together, they reveal a common theme. Students at BMHS are not asking for less learning, but for learning that feels meaningful and manageable. They want timely feedback, a reasonable number of assessments, an understanding of the stress they experience, and classroom tasks that clearly connect to their education.



Students can be as annoyed with teachers as teachers can be annoyed with students.

Overall, these perspectives show that communication between students and teachers is important for creating a better classroom environment.

By listening to student concerns and adjusting certain practices, teachers can help reduce stress while still maintaining strong academic expectations.

CYBERBULLYING (CON'T)

student from Hampton High School, stated: "When people are online, they think they can say whatever they want, and when in person, they may have to deal with consequences."

While this feeling of anonymity and lack of consequences helps in explaining why cyberbullying happens so often online, it does not reflect the impact it can have on people who experience it. For some people, they just ignore it and go about their day but for others, repeated insults and targeted comments can lead to stress, embarrassment, and a decrease in confidence. Some people may begin to feel isolated or uncomfortable when participating in online activities.

Constant bullying online can also cause people to overthink their interactions with others online or even stop using social media altogether. St. Malachy's Memorial High School student, Jacob Jenson shared: "Cyberbullying doesn't just stay online. It can seriously affect people long after it happens." This shows how the effects of cyberbullying can vary from person to person and continue even after bullying takes place.

While not every case of cyberbullying has severe long-lasting consequences, online harassment can still have real effects on people who experience it and shouldn't be overlooked, just because it happens behind a screen.



WHAT'S IN YOUR BACKPACK?

By: Justice MacLean

Students' backpacks are more than just bags for carrying school supplies: they are a peek inside top of a student's life, reflecting academic demands, personal habits and even their personality. If you take a closer look, you may find a mix of forgotten items, and maybe a few unexpected things that tell stories of the student's life or how they navigate it.

When asked what was in their backpacks, grade 9 student Jazlyn Whalen said: "A lot of garbage and a pencil or two, a makeup bag, and a hairbrush." These are daily essentials and school supplies.

At the core of any student's backpack are academic materials. Textbooks, notebooks, binders, and paper are foundations. These items vary depending on the grade level, the student, and course load. But even after all that many students carry a lot of the same things. Most will carry pencil cases, pens, highlighters, erasers, and sometimes (most times) a calculator.

Another grade 9 student, Lily Warren, said, "A lot of paper, too many paper, and pencils." This shows the similarities between the two students, when it came to their bags.

Beyond schoolwork, backpacks often contain personal items that students rely on throughout the day. Whether that is a hairbrush, a water bottle, a phone, snacks, drinks, and items just to keep them energized and more throughout the day. But interestingly, backpacks can also reveal a student's interests and personality. Some students are dependent on things in their backpacks like some sort of lifeline because they carry their entire lives inside of it, but that also brings me to the next point.

Not everything inside a backpack is useful, the garbage inside the backpack is not useful, and neither are the electronics that are brought and used out of school authority. Things can pile up inside the backpacks, making them dirty, or not useful. Things like papers and other assignments can get dam-

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WHY SUMMER IS FUN

By: Sid Islam

For high school students juggling exams, part-time jobs, and endless assignments, summer break is a rare breath of fresh air. But according to students themselves, the best part isn't sleeping in—it's something much simpler.

"Summer is fun for me because I get to spend time with my family," said Adnan Islam, a grade 9 student at BMHS. For Adnan, summer means reconnecting with loved ones. Between homework and extracurriculars, the school year often leaves little room for family dinners or weekend trips. Summer changes that. Whether it's a backyard barbecue, a board game night, or simply watching a movie on a Tuesday, the slow pace allows families to be present with one another.

When asked the same question, Aayush, a grade 11 student at BMHS, agreed, but he kept his answer straightforward: "Because summer is fun," he said. For students in higher grades, like Aayush, summer is equally valuable—even without a deep explanation. Sometimes fun doesn't need a reason. It's the pool days, the late-night fast-food runs, the video game marathons, and the freedom from bell schedules. After a demanding junior year filled with AP classes and college prep, pure, unstructured fun is its own reward.

Unplugging from academic pressure helps teenagers recharge emotionally and avoid burnout.

So while summer includes ice cream, sleep, and sunshine, its real gift might be simpler: a chance to be young.



PJS (CON'T)

yeah, I really don't understand why you guys don't have it."

The reality is that BMHS cannot have PJ Days anymore. Despite having clearly explained guidelines, some students would use those days to dress inappropriately and wear as little as possible.

The good news is that we are still allowed to have Comfy and Cozy days, which may prevent people from exploiting the theme day and using it as an excuse to wear basically swimwear in school.

BACKPACK (CON'T)

aged by these cluttered backpacks, which can make it even worse for the person, who must hold onto it.

Costco employee Sarah MacLean says: "Students should have more necessary things in their bags and less distractions."

UNDER PRESSURE (CON'T)

Despite these challenges, students continue to find their own ways to cope. To combat her anxiety, Butland explained: "I just kind of sit in my thoughts until it gets me too worked up, which probably isn't the best, but then I like just try and think of nothing."

Colbourne, on the other hand, takes a more active approach: "Personally I go to the barn, riding kind of cures the soul. But I like to also think ahead and plan when I'll do everything I have to do."

Their experiences illustrate how anxiety can manifest in diverse ways for different students. Despite using different coping techniques, both reveal how students constantly work to manage daily pressure.

For some students, however, anxiety begins to shift as they approach graduation. Grade 12 student Elizabeth Butland shared: "As a grad, I think about how relationships will change with my friends and how that will affect us both."

As graduation nears, concerns often go beyond academics to life after Bernice MacNaughton. Graduation can bring anxiety about what comes next, both in life and in personal relationships.

The shift in how anxiety appears is also noticeable in a teacher's perspective, particularly as students progress through high school. Looking at stress throughout the different grade levels, English and Media Studies teacher, Ms. Myra Maillet explains that it is less about how much stress students feel and more about how they respond to it over time.

"I don't see a difference in stress levels by grade because

PDA (CON'T)

we are here. So, if you could, please, just lay off it, and wait until you're out of school that would be fantastic."

It is necessary for us to also ask what the couples might feel about this situation. Grade 11 student Kaleigh Fisher gave us her opinion on PDA in school: "Personally, I don't really care. I love my boyfriend, and I want to show my love to him, but I feel like at the end of the day you can keep it to a certain level." A few other Highlanders agreed with it, stating that it is okay, as long as it's under control.

So is it really the couples who are the problem, or just the wrong time, wrong place? Common sentiment suggest it's the latter. PDA only becomes a problem when it causes distraction or discomfort in everyday life or surrounding people.

At the end of the day, we would much rather see Highlanders show love, care and respect, than hate and violence.

each kid experiences stressors relative to their own experiences and contexts." Maillet continues, "What is incredibly stressful for a grade 9 student might not cause the same stress in a grade 12 student, and vice versa. The difference I tend to notice most is how students gain strategies over time to deal with stressors. They are still stressed, but coping strengthens over time."

Maillet also notes that anxiety can affect students' classroom behaviour in several different ways: "Sometimes anxiety can take a kid right out of the class, they might not show up, or they might skip a lot. Sometimes, anxiety shows up through distractions, like phones and music dependency. Sometimes, kids might express their anxiety through perfectionism or fear of speaking directly to teachers and asking for help."

In response, Maillet emphasizes the importance of early support and understanding, explaining that she aims to put a student's personal needs before their academic responsibilities: "How I support students who are struggling with anxiety is to, first, believe them. Once a student is emotionally regulated, and I am sure they are safe, we can start to work on academic demands."

Ultimately, although anxiety may continue to affect students' everyday lives, it does not define their future. Whether it appears in classrooms, deadlines, or uncertainty about the future, students continue learning how to manage it over time.

As stated by Colbourne: "Keep calm, one test isn't going to ruin your life. It's okay to relax too. And stop comparing yourself! We are all on our own road."



Games Night 2026

ART AND THE ABILITY TO INSPIRE STUDENTS

By: Luke Young

Art is subjective. If used, it can inspire or even influence others, fostering empathy, triggering emotional, psychological, and social change. Though in this school there are problems, a few years ago the teachers made students create images with ai art for assignments. As most know, art steals images, and profits, combing them into something people call slop.

One anomalous student, Moira Sarusa, shared their thoughts on this school. "I think this school treats the creative students very kindly, at least compared to my previous schools. More courses and flexible activities that students are able to choose themselves."

Others share how art makes them emotional, such as writing or poetry. Malcome Hawkins stated: "Ya'll know the modern history assignment about writing a letter home from the perspective of a soldier? That actually made me emotional."

A study published by The National Center for Biotechnology shows that art helps people regulate emotion.

<https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC12617907/>

This study involved 92 young adults in a guided tour of a contemporary art exhibition focused on themes of human freedom, testing the immediate benefits of art on anxiety, empathy, and compassion.

Participants provided data on their art preferences and psychological traits before the visit, which was then recorded via mobile eye tracking. Results showed a decrease in anxiety, mainly among those with higher baseline anxiety, and an increase in empathy and compassion, especially in individuals with initially low levels.

MOBILITY ISSUES: HOW STUDENTS AND STAFF CAN IMPROVE SCHOOL ACCESSIBILITY



By: Mason LeBlanc

At BMHS, crowded hallways and everyday obstacles are making it difficult for some students and staff to move safely through the school, highlighting the need for a more accessible environment.

For students with mobility challenges, even simple parts of the school day can become stressful. Seth Caissie, who sometimes uses a walker, explained how seasonal conditions add to the difficulty. "In the winter, the sidewalks are icy and have snow, and it is hard for me to push my walker," Caissie said.

Inside the school, the situation can be just as challenging. "In the hallways, some people make space for me to get through, and sometimes, I have to say 'move please,'" Caissie added.

Obstacles like chairs left out in classrooms, library, or crowded hallways can create serious barriers. Ms. Rhonda Helgason who runs the library pointed out that when students don't push in their chairs, it affects more than just tidiness. "It makes work for other people and makes it hard for people with mobility issues to get around the school," she said. Students using crutches, walkers, canes, or wheelchairs—and even those who are visually impaired—can struggle to navigate when pathways are blocked.

Staff members also emphasize the importance of awareness and communication. Ms. Enid Leger, an educational assistant who works with a student with zero vision, said students and staff should be more mindful of others, especially in busy hallways. "Be aware when coming out of rooms," Leger said.

She also explained how small actions can make a big difference when interacting with someone who has limited or no vision. Introducing yourself and giving clear directions, such as saying "Hi, this is [name], I'm on your right/left," can help prevent confusion and make movement safer.

Improving accessibility at BMHS doesn't require major changes—just more awareness and consideration. Keeping hallways clear, pushing in chairs, and being mindful of others can help create a safer, more inclusive environment for everyone.

By working together, students and staff can make the school a place where everyone can move freely and confidently.